

We claim:

Sub AU

1. A bunt aid for use with a bat, the bat having a handle and a barrel, the bunt aid comprising:
 - 5 at least one cup;
 - at least one strap attached to the cup; and
 - the strap adapted to secure the cup to the bat.
2. The bunt aid of claim 1, wherein the at least one strap further
10 comprises:
 - at least one end detachably coupled to the at least one cup; and
 - a length sufficient to wrap around the barrel.
3. The bunt aid of claim 2, wherein the at least one detachably coupled
15 end couples to the at least one cup using a mechanism comprising at least one of a snap, a Velcro strip, an adhesive, a buckle, or suction cup.
4. The bunt aid of claim 1, wherein the at least one cup is positionable
20 along the bat.
5. The bunt aid of claim 1, wherein the at least one cup comprises:
 - a seating surface adapted to be secured adjacent to the bat; and
 - sidewalls having a rim, the sidewalls attached to the seating surface
 - and extending outward from the seating surface to terminate at the rim,
 - 25 such that the rim defines a first opening.
6. The bunt aid of claim 5, wherein the sidewalls generally taper outward
between the seating surface and the rim.
- 30 7. The bunt aid of claim 5, wherein the seating surface, sidewalls and rim have substantially a funnel shape.

10053289.01.1702

8. The bunt aid of 5, wherein the opening defines a geometrical shape.
9. The bunt aid of claim 8, wherein the geometrical shape comprises one
5 of a circle, an ellipse, a rectangle, a square, a triangle, an oblong, a semi-
circle, a semi-ellipse, or a trapezoid.
10. The bunt aid of claim 5, wherein the seating surface comprises at least
a second opening to expose the bat surface.
- 10 11. The bunt aid of claim 5, wherein the rim comprises:
a lip,
the lip having an outer portion, a transition portion, and an inner
portion; and
15 the lip being generally parallel to the bat surface at the outer portion
and generally parallel to the sidewalls at the inner portion.
12. The bunt aid of claim 1, wherein the at least one cup is constructed
from at least one of rubber, foam, leather, synthetic leather, polymers,
20 composites, metals, or woods.
13. A bunt aid for use with a bat, the bat having a handle and a barrel, the
bunt aid comprising:
means for simulating the catching of a ball with the bat; and
25 means for attaching the simulating means to the bat.
14. The bunt aid of claim 13, wherein the means for simulating is a means
for guiding the bat to the ball.
- 30 15. The bunt aid of claim 14, wherein the means for simulating is a cup.

16. The bunt aid of claim 13, wherein the means for simulating is a means for deadening the impact of the ball on the bat.
17. The bunt aid of claim 16, wherein the means for deadening is at least one of a foam sleeve, a rubber sleeve, and a spring.
18. A bat adapted for use as a bunt training aid, the training aid comprising:
a handle portion;
a barrel portion;
an intermediate portion between the handle portion and the barrel portion; and
a bunt aid attached to the barrel portion.
19. The bat of claim 18, wherein the bunt aid is integral to the bat.
20. The bat of claim 18, wherein the bunt aid is detachable from the bat.
21. The bat of claim 18, wherein the bat is constructed from one of a metal, a wood, or a polymer.
22. The bat of claim 18, wherein a spring couples the handle portion and the barrel portion of the bat.
23. The bat of claim 22, wherein a tension on the spring is controllable by twisting a knob on the handle.
24. The bat of claim 22, wherein a tension of the spring is controllable by twisting a cap on the barrel.